

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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E.O. 11652 N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJ: GUJARAT POLITICAL SITUATION: FRONT GOVERNMENT BARELY
SURVIVES TEST

1. THE JANATA FRONT GOVERNMENT SURVIVED A TEST OF STRENGTH ON FEBRUARY 12 WHEN IT DEFEATED A CONGRESS (R) RESOLUTION DISAPPROVING THE ORDINANCE AMENDING THE PANCHAYAT ACT. ACCORDING TO A LOCAL KNOWLEDGEABLE JOURNALIST WHO COVERS THE GUJARAT SCENE AND WHO HAS FURNISHED RELIABLE INFORMATION IN THE PAST, CONGRESS (R) LEADER MADHAVSINGH SOLANKI AND CHIMANBHAI PATEL COLLABORATED IN INTRODUCING THE RESOLUTION IN THE BELIEF THAT THE FRONT WOULD BE IN DISARRAY FOLLOWING THE DISSOLUTION OF KMLP, WOULD NOT SURVIVE THE VOTE, AND WOULD FALL.

2. CONTRARY TO THE HOPES OF THE CPCC(R) THAT THIS STRATEGY WOULD FORCE THE FRONT OUT, THE FRONT SURVIVED AS 91 MEMBERS OF THOSE PRESENT AND VOTING SUPPORTED IT. (FOUR DEPUTIES REPORTEDLY STILL SUPPORTING THE FRONT WERE ABSENT, WHICH WOULD BRING ITS OVER ALL SUPPORT AT THE PRESENT TO 95.) HOWEVER, OUR JOURNALIST SOURCE REPORTED THAT THE FRONT LEADERSHIP WAS BADLY SHAKEN BY

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THE NARROWNESS OF THE VOTE.

3. THE SAME SOURCE STATED THAT THE GPCC(R) IS UNHAPPY WITH GUJARAT GOVERNOR VISHWANATHAN, WHOSE IMPARTIALITY, THEY REPORTEDLY BELIEVE, HAS ENABLED THE FRONT GOVERNMENT TO REMAIN IN POWER. THE GOVERNOR RETURNED FROM HIS BRIEF VACATION IN KERALA AND SO FAR AS WE KNOW IS NOW IN AHMEDABAD.

4. MEANWHILE, HITENDRA DESAI IS CONTINUING THE PRESSURE ON THE FRONT GOVERNMENT, SAYING, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THAT WITHOUT KMLP SUPPORT, THE JANATA FRONT HAS "NO MORAL RIGHT" TO CONTINUE IN POWER SINCE IT HAS NOW BECOME "A MINORITY GOVERNMENT." DESAI REPORTEDLY WELCOMED THE DISSOLUTION OF THE KMLP AND SAID A REGIONAL PARTY HAS NO PLACE IN GUJARAT, WHICH SHOULD "MOVE WITH THE NATIONAL CURRENT."

COURTNEY

UNQUOTE. SAXBE

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